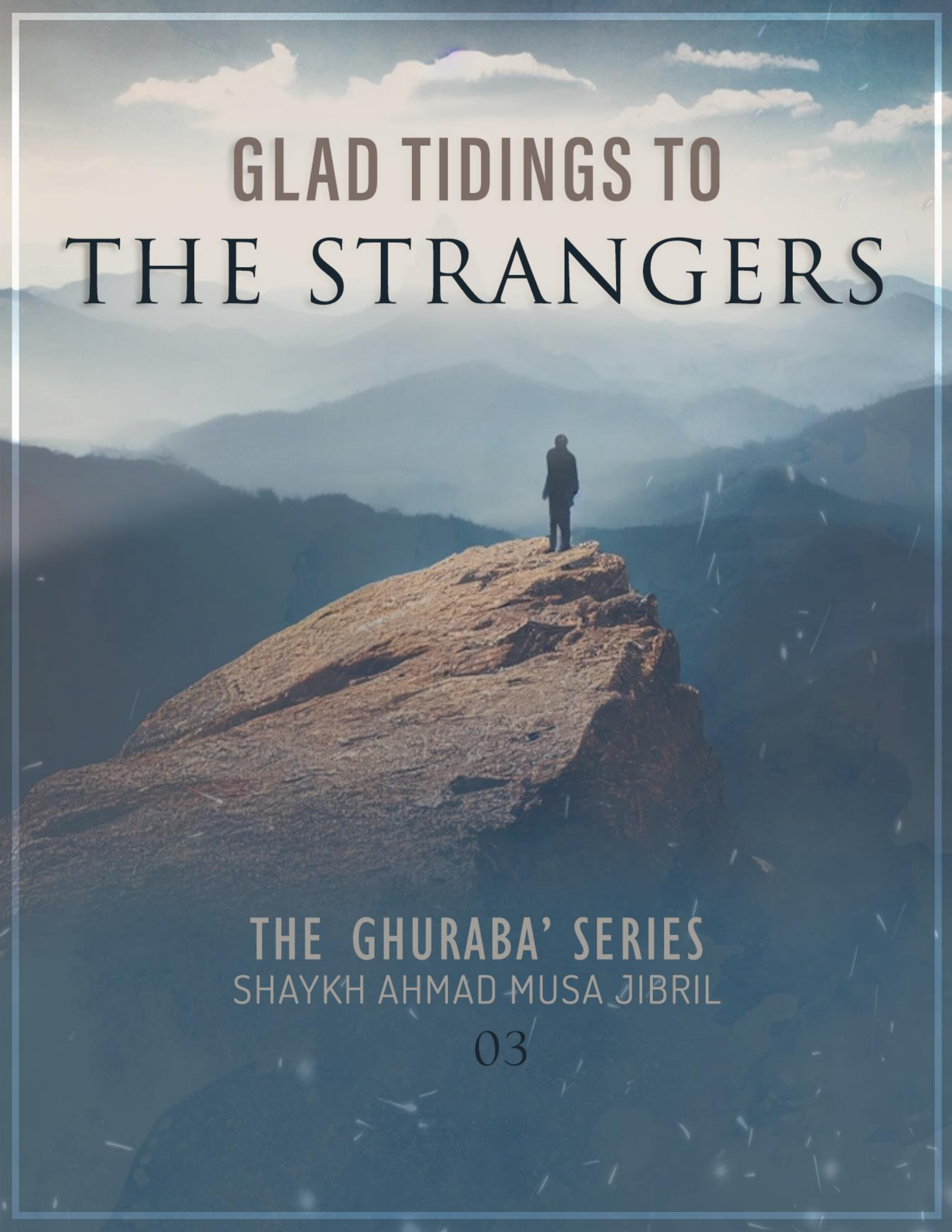
GLAD TIDINGS TO THE STRANGERS



THE GHURABA' SERIES

SHAYKH AHMAD MUSA JIBRIL

03

GLAD TIDINGS TO

THE STRANGERS

The Ghurabā' Series (03)

Islam Began as Something Strange Pt. II

Ash-Shaykh Al-Imām Ahmad Mūsā Jibrīl (حفظه الله)

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

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الحمد لله رب العالمين، وصلى الله وسلم وبارك على عبده ورسوله نبينا محمد، وعلى آله وصحبه وسلم تسليماً كثيراً مزيداً إلى يوم الدين، أما بعد

In the past two Khawātir we briefly went over the background pertaining to the narrations of the Hadīth on Al-Ghurabā'. Then after that, we mentioned some verses that support its meaning, and then a brief sentence-by-sentence explanation of the Hadīth from the statements of the Ulamā'. Then we showed that the Hadīth is a prophecy, first of all. Second of all, that it's glad tiding, and we left off on the third point pertaining to Tūbā being a praise, an encouragement, a tree in Jannah, or Jannah itself that's reserved for strangers.

Ibn Jarīr, Ibn Hibbān, At-Tabari, and Imām Ahmad reported that the Messenger ﷺ was asked,

قَالَ رَجُلٌ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ مَا طُوبَى؟ قَالَ شَجَرَةٌ فِي الْجَنَّةِ مَسِيرَةُ مِئَةِ سَنَة

Tūbā, the Prophet ﷺ said, is a tree in Jannah.

شَجَرَةٌ فِي الْجَنَّةِ مَسِيرَةُ مِئَةِ سَنَةٍ ثِيَابُ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ تَخْرُجُ مِنْ أَكْمَامِهَا

It's a tree in Jannah, travel around it is a distance of a hundred years. The clothes of the people of Jannah are made from its calluses.

It's a tree in Jannah. Travel around it is a distance of a hundred years. The clothes of the people of Jannah are made from its calluses, which are the outer casing of its flowers. Then there's a more authentic Hadīth, that's very similar to this, on the authority of Abu Hurayrah رضي الله عنه in Sahīh Al-Bukhāri, but it doesn't have the specific term "Tūbā" in it.

We also have the Hadīth of Utbah Ibn 'Abdin As-Sulami that is in many books of Hadīth — Musnad Ahmad, Ibn Hibbān, Ibn Jarīr, Al-Qurtubi, Ibn Abi Hātim, At-Tabarāni, Ibn Mardaway, Abu Nu'aym Al-Asfahāni, Ibn Abi 'Āsim fis-Sunnah — that a Bedouin came to the Prophet ﷺ and asked him questions, and the first one was about the Hawd, the Cistern. Then the bedouin asked after that.

قال الأعرابي: فيها فاكهة؟

Are there fruits in Jannah?

The Messenger ﷺ said,

قال: نعم، وفيها شجرة تدعى طوبى

Yes and there's a tree called Tūbā.

The bedouin asked,

أي شجر أرضنا تشبه؟

What tree of this world does it resemble?

The Prophet ﷺ said,

ليست تشبه شيئا من شجر أرضك

It doesn't resemble any of the trees of this land or this world.

Then the Messenger ﷺ followed up with a question,

فقال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: أتيت الشام؟

Have you ever visited Ash-Shām?

قال: لا

The man said. "No."

He (ﷺ) said,

تشبه شجرة بالشام تدعى الجوزة

It resembles a tree in Al-Shām called Al-Jawza,

which is the walnut tree.

تنبت على ساق واحد، وينفرش أعلاها

It grows on one trunk, and then spreads its branches higher up.

Then the Bedouin asked, how mighty, how big is it?

ما عظم أصلها؟

How big is its trunk?

The Prophet ﷺ said,

لو ارتحلت جذعة من إبل أهلك، ما أحطت بأصلها حتى تنكسر ترقوتها هرما

If one of the camels of you, that you have or your people have, was to go around it, it wouldn't complete one circle or circuit around it before its neck was broken of old age or exhaustion. [1]

Then he asked about the grapes of Jannah.

The point being is, looking forward to Tūbā after knowing it brings comfort to the Strangers who are agonizing, forsaken, and lonely. It penetrates tranquility deep into the hearts of those struggling with the whispers of the Nafs during that trial. It boosts the Īmān and inspires one to bear being a Stranger, and at the same time, it removes any and all sorrow, grief, heartache, and pain those holding

[1] Ahmad: 17642

on the ember of Haqq may feel. They know they pay a hefty price in this vanishing Dunyā only to attain the ultimate prize of Tūbā and an immense eternal reward from Allāh سبحانه وتعالى in an Everlasting Life. The Hadīth obliterates the criterion, the rebuttal, and the proof the ignorant masses and their evil leaders bring when they determine and judge the evil they're on by pointing to the Haqq as being strange and its adherents as being very few. The Hadīth leaves no room or way for those whose principle, trend, and custom in judging is to go with the majority and what the flow is on. The Hadīth flips the scale on those deluded by the majority when judging and determining the correctness and truthfulness of who's on the Haqq and who's on the Bātil. That argument they make, *"**All** those people, **all** those Shuyūkh don't know, but **you** know?!"* That all, when you're on the Haqq, becomes feeble next to this Hadīth. The Mercy to Mankind ﷺ wanted you to envision the light at the end of the tunnel, because he knows firsthand the pain and struggle Strangers after him will endure.

In a final note on this Hadīth, before we dwell deeper into the topic, *especially* for the students of 'Ilm, we emphasize that the Hadīth

بَدَأَ الإِسْلاَمُ غَرِيبًا وَسَيَعُودُ كَمَا بَدَأَ غَرِيبًا فَطُوبَى لِلْغُرَبَاء

Islām initiated as something strange, and it would revert to its (old position) of being strange. So Tūbā is for the Strangers.[2]

is solidly authentic, with many solidly authentic narrations in that exact same wording, and more so in similar wordings. So that narration is authentic, and there's also a narration in Sahīh Muslim with the addition,

وَهُوَ يَأْرِزُ بَيْنَ الْمَسْجِدَيْنِ كَمَا تَأْرِزُ الْحَيَّةُ فِي جُحْرِهَا

And it would recede between the two mosques just as the serpent crawls back into its hole.[3]

[2] Muslim: 145
[3] Muslim: 146

Islām would revert back to being strange again and it would recede between the two Masjids just like a serpent crawls back into its hole. That Hadīth is in Sahīh Muslim — of course authentic.

Then there's other narrations that define who the Strangers are. In an unpublished, Arabic book that I wrote in my late teens, before the internet and computer age, and I had some Ulamā' of Hadīth review it, and the first one who reviewed it for me was Shaykh Hammād Al-Ansāri, who corrected some points and he advised me on some others. It was a detailed study on the various narrations of this Hadīth, this particular Hadīth. What I did was I went through all the various narrations, and the conclusion is that all the narrations with those additions describing the Strangers, all those have issues with their authenticity. And I say it very summarized, otherwise I would go through it, because these are summarized talks. And we're saying the ones with additions that describe the Strangers. For example, when the Messenger ﷺ was asked about the Strangers in Hadīth Abil Ahwas 'an Abdillāh,

قال: قيل: ومن الغرباء؟ قال: النزاع من القبائل

Strangers who have left their families and tribes.[4]

Describing Strangers, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said, *"They are those who depart from the tribes."* He said Strangers are the ones who left their families and tribes. What it means is that you see from every family, every tribe, every background, every family, one or two who come to the Haqq. So that's one narration. In another narration, the Messenger ﷺ said,

الذين يصلحون عند فساد الناس

"They are the ones who reform people when they become evil and corrupt and astray." In another narration,

[4] Ibn Mājah: 3988

فَطُوبَى لِلْغُرَبَاءِ وَهُمُ الَّذِينَ يُصْلِحُونَ مَا أَفْسَدَ النَّاسُ مِنْ بَعْدِي من سنتي

Tūbā for the Strangers. They are those who will set right the corruption caused in my Sunnah by people after my death.[5]

In Sunan al-Tirmidhi, that Tūbā is for the ones — the few — who correct and set right the corruption caused in my Sunnah by the people after my death. In At-Tabarāni, another narration,

الذين يصلحون إذا فسد الناس ولا يمارون في دين الله ولا يكفرون أحدا من أهل التوحيد بذنب

Those who correct and reform the people when they fall into corruption and neither quarrel in the religion nor declare disbelief upon anyone of the people of Tawhīd on account of a sin.

In Musnad Ahmad, Al-Bayhaqi, At-Tabarāni, and other narrations,

أناس صالحون قليل في ناس سوء كثير

Another one,

الذين يزيدون إذا نقص الناس

Another one,

لذين يحيون سنتي ويعلمونها عباد الله

Those who revive my Sunnah and teach it to the servants of Allāh.

Another one,

[5] Tirmidhi: 2630

المتمسك يومئذ بسنتي كالقابض على الجمر

The addition in this one was that *"Those who hold on my Sunnah are like the ones holding onto a burning ember."*

The most authentic of those is the first two that I mentioned: النزاع من القبائل and then الذين يصلحون عند فساد الناس. So let me mention here another benefit, since we're at this point. It pertains to the science of the Hadīth. When saying those two are the most authentic pertaining to a group of Ahādīth, in the context that I mentioned, that among Muhaddithīn doesn't necessarily mean that it's authentic. It means it's the strongest of the weak Hadīth, meaning they are the least weak among the weak Hadīth, as An-Nawawi رحمه الله defined that specific statement. So we're not disputing here the meanings of those narrations, but the thing about it is that chains have issues with them. That's why I didn't go over every single one of them. Otherwise, I would have.

So, Yā Muwahhid, Yā Muwahhidah! Let me leave you with that there was once upon a time, 'Amr Ibn Hishām and 'Abd Al-'Uzzā, who ruled with an iron fist and shouted Kufr in the holiest of holies — in and surrounding the Ka'bah, and all around Makkah — hurling every type of insult, slander, accusation, and harm against RasūlAllāh ﷺ, savagely and aggressively flexing their muscle and power on RasūlAllāh ﷺ and the early Strangers of Islām. All while RasūlAllāh ﷺ was occupied in Dār Al-Arqam, teaching a few people in secrecy. You don't recognize 'Amr Ibn Hishām or 'Abd Al-'Uzzā because they were disgraced and rebranded as Abu Jahl and Abu Lahab, the Father of Ignorance and the Father of Flames. Both met their demise from Allāh سبحانه وتعالى as reeking cadavers, one in the Qalīb of Badr and the other in his own house, abandoned, unburied, in humiliation for days. And the stranger RasūlAllāh ﷺ — the man whose blessed neck they attempted to set their feet on, the blessed back they put the intestines of a camel on, the one they physically and verbally bullied and mocked in every conceivable way — he ﷺ and his message were raised high in esteem, high in fame, dignified

in remembrance, in reputation, and those vanguard Strangers around him became the leaders of the globe.

Islām began strange and it will return strange, so Tūbā is for the Strangers. The Hadīth with so many narrations, its meaning deeply rooted in the Qur'ān, and a topic so essential that the Ulamā' devoted chapters, or at times booklets, and even books to that topic. *Sifat Al-Ghurabā'* Lil-Ājurri, *Kashf Al-Kurba fi Wasf Hāl Ahl Al-Ghurba* Lil-Hāfidh Ibn Rajab Al-Hanbali, *Bayān Ghurbat Ahl Al-Islām* li 'Ali Ibn Maymūn. More contemporary is the book *Ghurbat Al-Islām* for Shaykh Hamūd Al-Tuwayjiri, among many others. And that's why we'll be spending more time, Insha'Allāh, around the meaning of the Ghurabā'.

JazākumAllāh Khayr.

وصلى الله على سيدنا محمد وعلى آله وصحبه وسلم